

March 13, 2022

To the Honorable Chairs Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, and members of the Judiciary Committee:
I am writing in support of:

- S.B. No. 387: AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.

I am also writing in opposition to the following bills:

- S.B. No. 365: AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS
- S.B. No. 388: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON OR A PERSON'S DWELLING, PLACE OF WORK OR MOTOR VEHICLE.
- H.B. No. 5418: AN ACT REVISING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATUTES AND INSURANCE STATUTES CONCERNING THEFT OF A MOTOR VEHICLE
- S.B. No. 392: AN ACT CONCERNING STATEMENTS MADE BY JUVENILES.
- H.B. No. 5417: AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE JUSTICE AND SERVICES AND FIREARMS BACKGROUND CHECKS.
- S.B. No. 386: AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY LAWS OF THIS STATE.

I write you as a resident of Glastonbury, a mother of three grown children raised in Connecticut, mother of a child with mental health issues, a teacher in Connecticut and a person of faith.

I am appalled to see how far back the bills I oppose would put us in progress that we have made in our juvenile justice system. Research tells us

- adolescent brains develop through age 25,
- during adolescence youth have greater impulsiveness and stronger emotional responses, and
- youth who receive community-based services as part of their involvement in the legal system are more likely to attend school, go to work, and reduce offending than those who are incarcerated and do not receive community-based services.

Further, black, and brown people are disproportionately detained, imprisoned and treated as adults when they are juveniles. These youth are children who deserve an equal opportunity to succeed in life.

We need to take thoughtful measures to solve the issue of crime, poverty, mental illness, gangs, and systemic racism. I request consideration of all human beings and collaboration across communities and systems to

- meet unmet needs of Connecticut youth,
- fund and improve systems, and
- monitor and educate Police departments, other systems, and community members to ensure equity for Black, Indigenous, other people of color and other marginalized people in our state.

I oppose the legislative proposals above, except for SB 387 which comes out of the Juvenile Justice and Oversight Committee, through which these types of proposals should be vetted. Now is the time to invest in issues that really matter to youth – mental health treatment, affordable housing, public education, job training, healthcare. We must not roll back important advances in youth justice through this legislation! Instead, I urge you to invest in our communities while maintaining and improving a restorative justice system to help our struggling youth become contributing citizens.

Sincerely,

Lora Andrada

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